

What is claimed is:

1. A protection system for an instrument comprising:
an instrument body having a handle portion and a distal end with an instrument extending therefrom;

5 an attached guard member disposed around the instrument body being selectively slidable along and around the instrument body, the guard member comprising:

a first opening therethrough for receiving the handle portion of the instrument body,

a second opening therethrough opposite the first opening for receiving the distal end of the instrument body, and

a grip; and

a means for locking the guard member in either an open position to expose the instrument, or a closed position to protect the instrument.

2. The protection system of claim 1 wherein the guard member is translucent.

3. The protection system of claim 1 wherein the instrument is a surgical instrument.

4. The protection system of claim 3 wherein the guard member is translucent.

5. The protection system of claim 1 wherein the grip comprises a ridge.

6. The protection system of claim 3 wherein the grip comprises a bump.

7. A surgical instrument comprising:

a body having a handle portion and a distal end with an instrument extending therefrom;
a guard member disposed around the instrument body being selectively slidable along
and around the instrument body, the guard member comprising:

5 a first opening therethrough for receiving the handle portion of the instrument
body,

a second opening therethrough opposite the first opening for receiving the distal
end of the instrument body, and

a third opening therethrough between the first and second openings partially
exposing the instrument; and

a means for locking the guard member in either an open position to expose the
instrument, or a closed position to protect the instrument.

8. The surgical instrument of claim 7 further comprising a grip on the guard
member.

9. The surgical instrument of claim 7 wherein the guard member is translucent.

10. The surgical instrument of claim 8 wherein the guard member is translucent.

11. The surgical instrument of claim 7 wherein the guard member is translucent and
includes a plurality of protrusions formed on the exterior thereof.

12. The surgical instrument of claim 7 wherein the means for locking the guard
member comprises threads.

13. The surgical instrument of claim 12 wherein the third opening extends to the first
opening.

14. A surgical instrument comprising:
- an elongated instrument body comprises:
 - a handle portion,
 - a distal end with an instrument extending therefrom, and
 - an intermediate portion between the handle portion and the distal end, the intermediate portion comprising handle threads; and
 - an attached guard member disposed around the instrument body and selectively slidable along and around the instrument body, the guard member comprising:
 - a first opening therethrough for receiving the intermediate portion of the instrument body,
 - a second opening therethrough opposite the first opening for receiving the distal end of the instrument body,
 - a third opening therethrough perpendicular to the first and second openings, and
 - a guard member threaded portion positioned such that the guard member may be locked in a closed position by engaging the guard member threaded portion with the handle threads.
15. The surgical instrument of claim 14 further comprising a grip on the guard member.
16. The surgical instrument of claim 14 wherein the guard member is translucent.
17. The surgical instrument of claim 15 wherein the guard member is translucent.
18. The surgical instrument of claim 14 wherein the guard member is translucent and includes a means for gripping.
19. The surgical instrument of claim 14 wherein the instrument is sharp.
20. The surgical instrument of claim 14 wherein the instrument is delicate.

21. A surgical instrument comprising:

an elongated instrument body comprising:

a handle portion,

a reduced diameter portion having a first set of external threads and a second set
5 of external threads spaced apart axially from the first set of threads, and

a distal end with a instrument extending therefrom;

a guard member disposed around the instrument body attached thereto, the guard member
and selectively slidable along, and rotatable around, the reduced diameter portion of the
instrument body, the guard member comprising:

a first opening therethrough for receiving the reduced diameter portion of the
instrument body,

a second opening therethrough opposite the first opening for receiving the distal
end of the instrument body,

a third opening therethrough axial to the first and second openings; and

an internally threaded portion for selectively engaging either of first or second
sets of threads on the reduced diameter portion of the instrument handle.

22. The surgical instrument of claim 21 further including a plurality of protrusions
formed on the exterior of the guard member, the protrusions facilitating
movement of the guard member and reducing rolling capacity of the surgical
instrument.

23. The surgical instrument of claim 21 wherein the guard member is translucent.

24. The surgical instrument of claim 22 wherein the guard member is translucent.

25. A reusable surgical instrument comprising:

an elongated body comprising:

a generally cylindrical handle portion;

a reduced diameter portion with a first set of external threads, and a second set of external threads spaced apart axially from the first set of threads; and

a distal end with a cutting blade extending therefrom; and

an attached guard member disposed around the body and selectively slidable along, and rotatable around, the reduced diameter portion of the body, the guard member comprising:

a first opening therethrough for receiving the reduced diameter portion of the body,

a second opening therethrough opposite the first opening for receiving the distal end of the body,

an internally threaded portion for selectively engaging either of first or second sets of threads on the reduced diameter portion of the handle, in order to lock the guard member in either an open or a closed position, and

a third opening therethrough between the first and second openings, extending toward the internally threaded portion, and forming a passageway for cleaning agents.

26. The reusable surgical instrument of claim 25 further including a plurality of protrusions formed on the exterior of the guard member, the protrusions facilitating movement of the guard member and reducing rolling capacity of the surgical knife.

27. The reusable surgical instrument of claim 25 wherein the guard member is translucent.

28. The reusable surgical instrument of claim 27 wherein the guard member is translucent.